

EDITORIAL PREFACE

The V International Congress of Applied Linguistics, held last August in Montreal, dedicated particular attention to the problems of Mother Tongue Education (MTE). For the first time in the history of AILA Congresses a plenary session, a section of lectures, and an intensive round table discussion was devoted to this subject. (In Copenhagen some lectures had been held, and at Stuttgart there was a large and extensive round table discussion). Furthermore, a new Commission for MTE, under the chairmanship of Harold Rosen, was established during the Congress.

This special issue of the AILA Bulletin, entirely dedicated to MTE, aims at disseminating information relevant to this field through the channels of AILA. It contains six articles which have been inspired by the discussions and the lectures at the Montreal Congress on this topic.

Three articles are dedicated to the relationship between MTE and other linguistic disciplines.

The article by Harold Rosen (U.K.), which is based on his lecture at the plenary session in Montreal, discusses the relationship between linguistics and the teaching of a mother tongue.

Michel Page (Canada) has contributed with a theoretical background paper of a psycholinguistic orientation.

Roger W. Shuy (USA) discusses the relevance of the recent developments in sociolinguistics to the study of language learning in early education.

The articles by Frank Marchand, Rosemarie Rigol and György Szépe describe the state of the art of MTE, respectively in France, the German Federal Republic and Hungary.

The previous announcements of this special number of the AILA Bulletin have given rise to the expression of considerable interest in MTE within the world of AILA. Some other articles describing MTE in different countries have also been received; for reasons of time and space, it has been impossible to publish them in this number. We have, therefore, decided to publish a further series of articles with the aim of providing a panoramic view of the state of MTE.

We greatly hope that this initiative will contribute to the international organisation, through the AILA Commission, of this field; a field which is fundamental for linguistics, applied linguistics and, indeed, for the study of everyday language.

György Szépe

Antonio Zampolli